

Remarks

The Applicants have amended the specification to place it into final condition for allowance. Entry into the official file is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. The Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's helpful comments with respect to specific ones of the claims. Those issues are addressed below.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 14, 19 and 20 have been amended to remove "-like" from the phrase "rubber-like" in accordance with the Examiner's helpful suggestion. Withdrawal of that portion of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to provide a clear distinction between components (C) and (D). Thus, both of Claims 1 and 2 now recite that the D component comprises from 50 to 90 wt% of an aromatic vinyl monomer, from 10 to 50 wt% of a vinyl cyanide-based monomer and from 0 to 60 wt% of maleinimide-based monomer and/or unsaturated carboxylic acid ester-based monomer. Support may be found in the Applicants' specification on page 13 in the first and second full paragraphs. Withdrawal of that portion of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 9, 10, 19 and 20 have further been amended to recite that the amount of the rubber polymer is based on 100 wt% of the total amount of components (A)-(D). Withdrawal of that portion of the rejection is also respectfully requested.

The Applicants have made several additional amendments to various of the claims. For example, Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to change the molecular weight range of "20,000 to 200,000" to "20,000 to 100,000." Entry of those changes into the official file is also respectfully requested.

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. The Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's comments with respect to the unit "gm." That was a typographical error and has been corrected to "µm." Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103 as obvious over Nakajima. The Applicants respectfully submit that Nakajima fails to explicitly or implicitly disclose the subject matter of those claims with respect to §102 and also fails to render those claims obvious under §103 for the reasons set forth below.

Nakajima discloses that the unsaturated carboxylic acid-modified copolymer (C) has a reduced viscosity of 0.2 to 0.5 dl/g. In sharp contrast, the Applicants' claimed unsaturated carboxylic acid-modified copolymer (C) has a number average molecular weight of 22,000 to 60,000. That molecular weight corresponds to a reduced viscosity of 0.55 to 0.83 dl/g. Therefore, the reduced viscosity of the unsaturated carboxylic acid-modified copolymer of Nakajima is different from that which the Applicants claim.

However, there is more. The acetone-soluble moiety of the graft polymer of the Applicants' claimed graft polymer (B) has a number average molecular weight of 20,000 to 100,000. Nakajima is completely silent as to this claimed aspect. Thus, Nakajima's component (C) is different from that claimed by the Applicants. The Applicants respectfully submit that Nakajima fails to explicitly or implicitly disclose at least the two above-mentioned aspects of the solicited claims. The Applicants therefore respectfully submit that Nakajima is inapplicable under §102.


The Applicants respectfully submit that these differences also easily render Claims 1-20 non-obvious over Nakajima. In each instance, there is no motivation to modify the claimed molecular rate of 22,000 to 60,000 based on the viscosity taught by Nakajima. In fact, the Applicants respectfully submit that Nakajima provides de-motivation for one skilled in the art to make modifications that would lead to the claimed molecular weight. In that regard, the Applicants invite the Examiner's attention to column 4 and the paragraph beginning at line 20 which states that when the copolymer has a reduced viscosity of more than 0.5 dl/g, its fluidity becomes poor. In other words, Nakajima discourages those skilled in the art from employing a viscosity of more than 0.5 dl/g. However, the Applicants defied the warnings provided by Nakajima and employ a component (C) having a molecular rate of 22,000-60,000 which corresponds to a reduced viscosity of 0.55 to 0.83 dl/g. This range is completely outside of the Nakajima disclosed range and is within a range that is actually discouraged by Nakajima. On this basis alone, the Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-20 are not obvious over Nakajima.

The Applicants respectfully submit that there are also no teachings with respect to the Applicants' claimed molecular weight of 20,000 to 100,000 for component (B). Nakajima fails to provide any teachings with respect to molecular weight or that any advantage could or would be gained by making any hypothetical modifications.

In any event, the Applicants have achieved surprising and excellent impact resistance and fluidity in addition to excellent chemical resistance as shown in Table 1 of the Applicants' specification. The Applicants respectfully submit that Nakajima fails to provide such results. As a consequence, the Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-20 are non-obvious over Nakajima under §103. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that the entire Application is now in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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